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APR-JUNE, 1991

# Capsule

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## PROFESSIONAL ENRICHMENT PROGRAMME AT CALCUTTA

The Professional Enrichment Programme for the middle-level museum professionals of the Asia and Pacific region has just ended. Organised by the Asia Pacific Organization of the International Council of Museums (ICOM)

during February 11 - March 9, 1991, the month-long programme was conducted in India by the National Council of Science Museums, with a view to provide exposure to advanced museum techniques in documentation, publication, display and audio visuals, using the state-of-the-art technology in microprocessors, computers, video recording, desk top publishing and screen printing. This was the first in the series of professional training programmes which are to follow hereafter.



Participants came from Bangladesh, China, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand and USSR. During the training programme, they went through a hectic schedule drawn up to provide maximum exposure within a short span of time. They were exposed to the study of software, entry, retrieval and updating of data; to the extensive use of computers in exhibit documentation, in the preparation of mailing list and directories of museums and museum personnel; to Desk Top Publishing (DTP) which included variation of fonts and point sizes, special effects, page make-up and printing on laser printer; to the art of making video films, to the fundamentals of script writing; location shooting, special effects of camera, computer graphics, stock music and editing. In the serigraphy workshop, every detail of silk screen printing was dealt with. Participants were introduced to iden-

tification of tools and materials, demonstration of techniques on different kinds of surfaces, preparation of simple multicoloured designs, drawing and hand-cut stencil making, finishing of art-work, photographic exposure on 5-star film, stretching of cloth on frame, and preparation of screen arrangements for registration and printing.

The course ended with a seminar on **Advanced Museum Techniques** on March 9, 1991 at Birla Industrial and Technological

Museum, Calcutta. Prof. Alpha Oumar Konaré, President of ICOM, explained the significance of the worldwide activities of ICOM, emphasizing that passion for mankind should be the driving force behind all museum activities. He invited all the participants of the training programme to join ICOM. Among the other speakers were Prof. Patrick J. Boylan (Member, ICOM Executive Council) from U.K., Ms. Irina Antonova (Vice President, ICOM) from the USSR, Mr. Brian Arthur (Chairperson, Advisory Committee, ICOM) from Canada, Mr. Jean-Pierre Mohen (Treasurer, ICOM) from France, and Mr. Vinos Sofka (Member, Executive Council, ICOM) from Sweden. Certificates were awarded to the participants by Prof. Konaré. These certificates, interestingly, were composed in the DTP machine during the training course and were screen printed by the participants themselves.



## SCIENCE FAIRS SCIENCE CAMPS

The first two months of the year hold special significance for the young science enthusiasts of the southern and the north-eastern states of the country. It is during this time of the year that occasions like the Southern India Science Fair and the Eastern India Science Camp bring them a chance to give free rein to their creativity.

As in the previous years, the events this year drew massive participation from the student community, making the programmes a thorough success. Hand in hand with the Department of Education, Government of Kerala, Visvesvaraya Industrial and Technological Museum, Bangalore, organised the Southern India Science Fair at Kottayam, Kerala from January 17-21, 1991. 324 students and 193 teachers from 169 schools participated with 406 exhibits. The states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamilnadu, as well as the union territory of Pondicherry were represented in the Fair.

The Eastern India Science Camp was held at Calcutta from February

5-9, 1991. The scenario at the premises of Birla Industrial and Technological Museum was very different during those days, with 233 students and 52 science club members coming from Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Manipur, Mizoram, Orissa, Sikkim, Tripura and West Bengal. In the work *experience camp*, - a special feature of the Science Camp, participants took up investigative projects on Botany, Zoology, Geology, Electronics and Aeromodelling under the able guidance of research institutes and university departments. The Camp was organised by Birla Industrial and Technological Museum, in collaboration with the Sports and Youth Services Department of the Government of West Bengal and the Education Directorates of the State Governments of the other states of north-eastern India.

Science Fairs were held at Purulia and Gulbarga too. District Science Centre, Purulia organised the District Science Fair from January 31-February 2, 1991. In the District Science Fair at Gulbarga, 210 students from 42 schools participated with 205 models. Nearly 4500 students visited the Fair.



Southern Indian Science Fair begins at Kottayam



District Science Fair at Gulbarga

## NATURE SCIENCE CAMP AT SIMLIPAL

Science Communicators' Forum, Calcutta organised at Simlipal in Orissa a Nature Science Camp, in which around 75 trainees, observers and instructors participated. The camp was characterized by a wide range of topics including 'Basic Camp Crafts and Techniques', 'Mountains : Types and Formations', 'Rocks : Collection and Identification', 'Maps : Thematic and Toposheet', 'Origin and Course of Rivers', 'Clouds and Weather Study', 'Ecology and Man', 'World of Plants', 'Basics of Rock Climbing', and 'Health and Environment in Hills and Forests'.



Eastern India Science Camp '91



A student demonstrating his model at Eastern India Science Camp

## SCIENCE CENTRE NEWS

Birla Industrial and Technological Museum, Calcutta

**B**irla Industrial and Technological Museum at Calcutta had its first model school science centre inaugurated by the Hon'ble Minister, Shri Chimanbhai Mehta, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India. The centre displays basic science kits, scientific charts, biological specimens, a set of handtools, audiovisuals, community science kits such as soil testing kit, water testing kit and medical kit.

The centre will provide catalytic support to the 35 school science centres of West Bengal. It shall continuously develop new concepts on kits, teaching aids and exhibits and disseminate those to the school science centres; hold audiovisual programmes, training programmes and workshops for teachers; and render technical expertise and guidance required for sustaining various activities of the school science centre.

Nehru Science Centre, Bombay

**A** science Club Personnel Course was organised for teachers who were exposed to a variety of programmes such as science demonstration lectures, computer awareness programme, sky observation programme, handling of audio visual equipment and fabrication of education kit. The basic objectives and methods of functioning of science clubs in schools were also explained.

Visvesvaraya Industrial and Technological Museum, Bangalore

**I**n the week-long Physics Hobby Centre organised by Visvesvaraya Industrial and Technological Museum, Bangalore and Dalmia H.S. School, Dalmiapuram, students and teachers jointly prepared models of Newton's Pendulum, Tower of Hanoi and Minimal Surface. These models were exhibited and demonstrated by the student participants.

Physics Hobby Centre, Bangalore

Regional Science Centre, Lucknow

**T**he 34th National Exhibition of Art - the great 'Art event' in the country - was held this year in the galleries of Regional Science Centre, Lucknow. Organised jointly by Lalit Kala Academy, Delhi and the National Council of Science Museums, the exhibition was inaugurated by Shri B. Satyanarayan Reddy, the Hon'ble Governor of Uttar Pradesh.

The preparation for the exhibition started a couple of months ago. 7000 paintings and graphics and around 600 sculptures were received from different parts of the country. Amongst these around



An 'Academy Award' winner receiving the award from Governor Shri Satyanarayan Reddy at the inaugural ceremony of National Art Exhibition, Lucknow.

Science Club Personnel Course, Bombay



Model School Science Centre, Calcutta

300 paintings and 50 sculptures were selected for final display. Several sculptures on stone were displayed in the centre's science park.

A seminar-cum-discussion on 'Art in Technology and Technology in Art' was also held in the auditorium of the centre.

#### Shrikrishna Science Centre, Patna

**S**hrikrishna Science Centre, Patna and Adventure Aero Club of Bihar jointly organised the second Bihar State Aeromodelling Championship at Gandhi Maidan, Patna on March 10, 1991.



Nature Study Camp, Gulbarga

Participants demonstrated an air show which was highly acclaimed by the fifteen thousand visitors who witnessed the programme.

#### Regional Science Centre, Bhopal

**T**he Mobile Science Exhibition unit of Regional Science Centre, Bhopal was on road for a month, covering five districts of Madhya Pradesh. Although it was initially planned that the exhibitions would be held at 18 schools, the programme had to be cut short due to the recent fuel crisis in the country. So, only twelve schools were covered. However, the exhibition generated tremendous response wherever it went.

#### District Science Centre, Gulbarga

**D**istrict Science Centre, Gulbarga and Department of Botany, Gulbarga University conducted a Nature Study Camp on February 18-19, 1991 at Gulbarga University. Major activities included



State Aeromodelling Championship, Patna



Software development programme, Purulia



Mobile Science Exhibition, Bhopal

identification of various types of plants and leaves in the Botanical Garden and collection of botanical specimens for research purposes. Around 30 students from the local schools participated in the camp.

#### District Science Centre, Tirunelveli

**T**he fourth Anniversary Day of District Science Centre, Tirunelveli was celebrated at the centre on February 27, 1991. An extempore speech contest on topics from science and technology was conducted for the college students of the adjacent areas.

#### District Science Centre, Purulia

**T**he 9th Anniversary Week of District Science Centre, Purulia was marked by a 'sit and draw' competition, an art exhibition, a teachers' training programme, a special film show, a tree identification programme, a science quiz contest, and the first Computer Fair which included quiz and extempore talk on computer, an on-the-spot essay writing competition and software development. The programmes were held during December 15-21, 1990.

## THE YANCHENPHUG EXHIBITION

**O**n October 5, 1991, a science exhibition from India was officially inaugurated by the Hon'ble Dy. Minister of Social Service, Government of Bhutan, at the Study Hall of Yanchenphug High School at Thimphu. For the first time in its history, National Council of Science Museums reached out to the schools of a neighbouring country, thereby strengthening Indo-Bhutan solidarity further.

Exhibits and experiments in the science exhibition covered a wide range of scientific principles, - from the properties of magnets to astronomy and sound. It also included mathematical problems and physical science subjects. The exhibition was designed especially for the high school students. Visitors, however, comprised adults also.

The 3-day programme included popular lectures and demonstrations, planetarium shows and computer awareness programmes.

The exhibition and the supporting programmes were organised by the UNESCO Regional Science and Technology Centre, New Delhi and Indian National Commission for Cooperation with UNESCO.

## EXPLAINING MIRACLES

**A** 5-day workshop on 'Explaining Miracles' was organised jointly by Regional Science Centre, Lucknow and the Lucknow District Science Club from December 8 - 13, 1990. In the workshop, a hundred miracles which are being performed by the 'godmen' during the past 30 years were explained to the astonishment of the audience. It was thoroughly clear from presentations and the explanatory lectures that no spiritual or supernatural power is re-

quired to walk on fire, to chew glass and razor blades, or to swallow fire balls. One can produce water and honey from the same vessel, or burn a five rupee note only to reproduce it a moment later. It is even possible to stay in an underground 'samadhi' for three consecutive hours, by virtue of natural, scientific reasons.

High school students from different parts of Uttar Pradesh were trained to perform these experiments. They would carry the message of the workshop to the schools of their respective localities.



Professor Premanand explaining miracles



Popular lectures, demonstrations and computer awareness programmes at Yanchenphug High School, Thimphu



## ICOM EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETS IN INDIA

The extraordinary session of the Executive Council of ICOM was held at New Delhi and Calcutta during March 3-9, 1991, setting the first example of the Council meeting in an Asian country. In order to reinforce its regional ties, and also to highlight rapid progress in the activities of the Asia-Pacific Organisation after its installation in Calcutta, India was chosen as the venue for the meeting. Dr. S.K. Mahapatra, the Additional Secretary of the Department of Culture, Government of India, inaugurated the meeting at National Science Centre, Delhi.

Ms. Elisabeth des Portes, Acting Secretary General of ICOM, discussed the changes she recently introduced into the Secretariat and reviewed the extent to which ICOM triennial programme has been

materialised. She also acknowledged the importance of UNESCO's support for many of the projects undertaken by ICOM.

Ms. Jane Sledge, the newly appointed Chief of the UNESCO-ICOM Museum Information Centre presented a 1991 work-plan for the Centre. It was decided that an Advisory Group headed by Prof. Patrick Boylan of UK would assist Ms. Sledge in formulating policies.

The Council expressed concern over the level of ICOM membership. Immediate and active efforts are required for fresh recruitment — it is recommended.

Prof. Alpha Oumar Konare, President of ICOM thanked the Indian Organisers for hosting the Council meeting with warmth and hospitality. He also appreciated the richness and diversity of India's cultural heritage, so expressive in the country's monuments.

## ASPAC GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

The Governing Board of ICOM Asia-Pacific Organisation met at Calcutta on March 7, 1991 and reviewed its activities and achievements since the last General Conference of ICOM. Compilation of computerised Directory of Museums, a Directory of Museum Personnel and a Directory of Training Facility for the Asia-Pacific Region is well under way. ASPAC Newsletter - the bulletin of the organisation is being published regularly twice a year. ICOM News - the newsletter of the International Council of Museums - is also emanating from the ASPAC headquarters. The most recent achievement is the completion of the month-long professional enrichment programme on advanced museum techniques which brought together 12 middle level museum professionals from 10 countries of the Asia-Pacific Region.

The Board, in accordance with recommendations from the Executive Council of ICOM, adopted the new Rules for ASPAC and prepared a plan for participation in ICOM'92 - the next General Conference to be held at Quebec City in Canada.



## NATIONAL SCIENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS

For all the science centres functioning under the National Council of Science Museums, National Science Day has ever been a most welcome and fitting occasion for popularising science with a renewed emphasis. As in the previous years, science popularisation activities were organised this year also, involving spontaneous participation of thousands of students and teachers, scientists and educationists, science enthusiasts from science clubs and the common people. Here is a report on the celebration programmes conducted by the centres.

**At Nehru Science Centre, Bombay**, extempore talk was organised on topics like 'Conservation of Nature', 'Pollution', 'Energy Crisis', 'Benefits of Science' and 'Drug Abuse and Awareness'. Besides, on-the-spot painting and poster competitions were held on 'Transport : If there is no Oil'. The inauguration of the renovated weather station at the centre was also a part of the celebration programme. During the inaugural function, balloons tied with tag carrying the message of the National Science Day were released in the air, and a lecture was delivered on the 'Life and Works of C V Raman'.

**Visvesvaraya Industrial and Technological Museum, Bangalore** celebrated the day by conducting

several programmes which included a wonderful talk on 'Superconductivity'.

Programmes at Birla Industrial and Technological Museum, Calcutta, included a seminar on 'Food Adulteration and its Detection', film shows, popular lectures, open house quiz contest, science poetry contest, debate competition on 'Eco Conservation Retards a Country's Development Efforts', costume parade, Taramandal demonstration, lecture on 'Air and Chemistry', astronomy workshop and tree identification programme.

**Regional Science Centre, Lucknow** organised a 6-day science festival where several government and semi-government institutions had put up pavilions to display their activities and achievements. A science magic show, a science debate competition and a science model competition were the major attractions in the festival. At **Regional Science Centre, Guwahati**, a quiz contest and a drawing competition were held among students on February 25 and 26 respectively. **Shrikrishna Science Centre, Patna** celebrated the day by organising 'sit and draw' competition on 'Nuclear Weapons and their Hazards' and also a popular talk on 'Nuclear Bombs and their Hazards'. At **Regional Science Centre, Nagpur**, sky observation programmes, plant identification programmes and science film shows were organised. A science rally, science film shows and planetarium programmes

marked the occasion at **Regional Science Centre, Bhopal**.

A colourful Science March with banners and tableaus carrying models was organised by **District Science Centre, Tirunelveli**. Participants raised slogans on 'Health and Hygiene', 'Energy' and 'Environment'. **District Science Centre, Dharampur** celebrated the day by organising science drama, career guidance sessions and employment oriented training programmes; and **District Science Centre, Purulia** organised a science march, a sit and draw competition, a quiz contest and an essay competition on 'Water Problem in the District of Purulia'.

*Bhubaneswar*



*Lucknow*



*Dharampur*



*Guwahati*



*Bombay*



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